

Appln No. 10/733,824

Amdt date May 2, 2005

Reply to Office action of February 1, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A gripper device for loosening, tightening or gripping objects, comprising:

a support structure defining a planar support surface and having a fixed, object contact surface in the form of a fixed wall extending upwardly from the planar support surface;

a cinch strap with a first end and a second end, with the second end being attached to the support structure; and

a pivot arm pivoted at one end to the support structure distant from the fixed wall and having a free end, wherein the first end of the cinch strap engages with the free end of the pivot arm, ~~and a second end that engages with the support structure,~~ wherein the free end of the pivot arm is positioned relative to the fixed wall such that when an object to be gripped is brought to bear against the cinch strap, the pivot arm will pivot towards the fixed wall and the cinch strap will at least partially make contact with the fixed wall to cause the cinch strap to at least partially surround and grip onto the object to be gripped.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A gripper device of claim 1 for loosening, tightening or gripping objects, comprising:

a support structure having a fixed, object contact surface in the form of a fixed wall;

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a cinch strap with a first end and a second end, with the second end being attached to the support structure; and

a pivot arm pivoted at one end to the support structure and having a free end, wherein the first end of the cinch strap engages with the free end of the pivot arm, and a second end that engages with the support structure, wherein the free end of the pivot arm is positioned relative to the fixed wall such that when an object to be gripped is brought to bear against the cinch strap, the pivot arm will pivot towards the fixed wall and the cinch strap will at least partially make contact with the fixed wall to cause the cinch strap to at least partially surround and grip onto the object to be gripped, wherein the fixed wall has a ridge to align and prevent cinch strap slippage.

3. (Original) The gripper device of claim 1, wherein the cinch strap has a high friction surface to grip objects.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently amended) ~~The~~ A gripper device of claim 1 for loosening, tightening or gripping objects, comprising:

a support structure having a fixed, object contact surface in the form of a fixed wall;

a cinch strap with a first end and a second end, with the second end being attached to the support structure; and

a pivot arm pivoted at one end to the support structure and having a free end, wherein the first end of the cinch strap

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engages with the free end of the pivot arm, and a second end that engages with the support structure, wherein the free end of the pivot arm is positioned relative to the fixed wall such that when an object to be gripped is brought to bear against the cinch strap, the pivot arm will pivot towards the fixed wall and the cinch strap will at least partially make contact with the fixed wall to cause the cinch strap to at least partially surround and grip onto the object to be gripped, further comprising a spring to bias the pivot arm away from the fixed, object contact surface.

6. (Original) The gripper device of claim 1, wherein the first end of cinch strap is fixed to the free end of the pivot arm.

7. (Previously presented) The gripper device of claim 6, further comprising a cinch strap engagement to retain the second end of the cinch strap to the support structure.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) ~~The A gripper device of claim 1 for~~ loosening, tightening or gripping objects, comprising:

a support structure having a fixed, object contact surface in the form of a fixed wall;

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a cinch strap with a first end and a second end, with the second end being attached to the support structure; and

a pivot arm pivoted at one end to the support structure and having a free end, wherein the first end of the cinch strap engages with the free end of the pivot arm, and a second end that engages with the support structure, wherein the free end of the pivot arm is positioned relative to the fixed wall such that when an object to be gripped is brought to bear against the cinch strap, the pivot arm will pivot towards the fixed wall and the cinch strap will at least partially make contact with the fixed wall to cause the cinch strap to at least partially surround and grip onto the object to be gripped, wherein the object contact surface has a non-slip surface.

12. (Original) The gripper device of claim 1, wherein the support structure can be mounted to any other surface.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A gripper device of claim 1 for loosening, tightening or gripping objects, comprising:

a support structure having a fixed, object contact surface in the form of a fixed wall;

a cinch strap with a first end and a second end, with the second end being attached to the support structure; and

a pivot arm pivoted at one end to the support structure and having a free end, wherein the first end of the cinch strap engages with the free end of the pivot arm, and a second end

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that engages with the support structure, wherein the free end of the pivot arm is positioned relative to the fixed wall such that when an object to be gripped is brought to bear against the cinch strap, the pivot arm will pivot towards the fixed wall and the cinch strap will at least partially make contact with the fixed wall to cause the cinch strap to at least partially surround and grip onto the object to be gripped, further comprising a cover plate that is shaped in a manner to retain the cinch strap in the device.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently amended) A gripper device for loosening a lid of a container, comprising:

a support structure defining a planar support surface and having a fixed wall extending upwardly from the planar support surface;

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a cinch strap with a first end and a second end, the second end being attached to the support structure; and

a pivot arm pivoted at a pivot end to the support structure distant from the fixed wall and having a free end spaced away from ~~and generally in front of~~ the fixed wall, the first end of the cinch strap being engaged with the free end of the pivot arm, wherein when a lid of a container is pushed against the cinch strap between the cinch strap's first and second ends, the pivot arm will automatically pivot towards the fixed wall, and the cinch strap will at least partially make contact with the fixed wall and cause the cinch strap to at least partially wrap around and grip onto the lid to thereby allow a user to twist the container while the gripper device tightly holds the lid.

22. (Previously presented) The gripper device of claim 21, wherein the cinch strap has a high friction surface to grip objects.

23. (Currently amended) The gripper device of claim 21, further comprising a spring to bias the pivot arm away from the fixed wall, ~~object contact surface~~.

24. (Previously presented) The gripper device of claim 21, wherein the fixed wall has a non-slip surface.

25. (Currently amended) A gripper device for loosening a twist on lid of a container, comprising:

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a support structure defining a planar support surface and having a fixed wall extending upwardly from the planar support surface;

a cinch strap with a first end and a second end, the second end being attached to the support structure; and

a pivot arm pivoted at a pivot end to the support structure distant from the fixed wall and having a free end spaced away from and generally in front of the fixed wall, the first end of the cinch strap being engaged with the free end of the pivot arm, wherein the device has an entrance defined by an area between the cinch strap's first and second ends in a general direction from the free end to the pivot end of the pivot arm, wherein when a lid is pushed into the entrance, the pivot arm will automatically pivot towards the fixed wall, and the cinch strap will at least partially make contact with the fixed wall and cause the cinch strap to at least partially wrap around and grip onto the lid to thereby allow a user to twist the container while the gripper device tightly holds the lid.